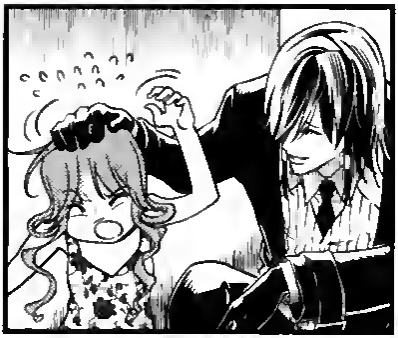
AFTERWORD BY SUEN WAI KWAN



There's a new character in this volume – Mr. Liu the butler.

Back when I first read the D03 novel, despite having a pretty small part, Mr. Liu left a deep impression on me. Is he a good guy or a bad guy? Or is he a man driven solely by profit? But after reading D04, everything became clear!

Mr. Tinhong has left a large blank space for us to ponder on what happened between Mr. Liu and Wu Jieling in the past. I believe Wu Jieling had always relied heavily on this butler and trusted him completely, while Mr. Liu had treated her more kindly than anyone else, for the sake of obtaining her favor or for some other reasons. That's why I added in two occasions in which they reminisce about their past, in an attempt to iterate their close bond. I've also dropped hints about Mr. Liu's personal history, which was fully revealed in the D04 novel, so as to help those who haven't read the novels remember him more easily. Additionally, Wu Jieling's conversation with Xiao Lai on the subject of souls is also my own creation, since I wish to emphasize her naivety, which makes it so hard for her to accept others' betrayal.

I have been intrigued and puzzled by the subject of life and death since I was little, but none of the various religions I encountered as I grew up could offer me a convincing explanation. A few years ago, I got to know about "New Age", which has the answers to all the questions I've ever asked. Since then, I've become completely obsessed with all sorts of books, podcasts and online programmes created by "New Age", from which I've learnt the fundamental mechanisms of the universe, the power of thinking, the purpose of the soul, etc. I have always wanted to share this knowledge with everyone through manhua, my forte.

*T/N: YEP. SHE'S PLAYING WITH BARBIE AND KEN.

The D Series touches on how the soul works, and I realized I could insert my own beliefs into the story with no contradiction or conflict to the original story, so I added in Xiao Lai and Wu Jieling's conversation in the love hotel. Of course, I showed my work to the publisher and Mr. Tinhong right after I finished drafting the storyboards. They hadn't raised the slightest objection, and Mr. Tinghong even assured me and welcomed me to add in new scenes, all of which made me incredibly glad and grateful.

The universe is a place of free will. There is no right or wrong, good or evil. Everything is an experience. It all depends on whether it sits well with you. Of course, I'm not encouraging people to do bad things. I absolutely believe that love is paramount. However, without the bad things, we would never understand how precious the good things are, and I will always choose to express myself through love.

Ah Suen

AFTERWORD BY TINHONG

The biggest difference between a writer and a manhua artist is merely their medium of expression. Their heads are filled with pretty much the same things.

I only found out we lived in the same district when I first met Ah Suen. All of our creations have probably been inspired by the radio signal in this district.

The second time we met, we had lunch at a dimsum restaurant. Our conversation started off pretty seriously, then it suddenly turned into a discussion on paranormal science-y stuff like the UFO. If I were from the 19th century, I would most definitely have balked at the idea of "there are more advanced civilizations other than mankind". Still, whenever I think about the great achievements of mankind, like the moment Armstrong first set foot on the moon, and the moment Curiosity* landed successfully on Mars, I get a strong premonition, that when our astronauts explore other planets in the distant future, we, a species known as "Homo sapiens of the Primates order of the Mammalia class of the Chordata phylum", will also be "aliens" to other species with a high intellect.

Those of you born after the 90s could probably never imagine that we used to save computer data on a 5 ¼ by 5 ¼ in floppy disk. It was so big you could fan yourself with it. Back then, a PC game package contained a dozen floppy disks. We had to load them one after another, and each of them took ages to load. Gaming was an exhausting business. It couldn't be helped, since the memory capacity of one of those huge disks was only about 1MB. These days, a single blue-ray disc can hold up to 128GB of data, which is 1024 x 128 times that of a floppy disk! The technological advancement in just 20 years was seriously shocking.

The entire world was still very backward before the 19th century.

Mankind developed most rapidly in the last 200 years. At this rate, our technological achievements will definitely be beyond imagination in the future (given if we humans don't accidentally destroy ourselves). Powerful military weapons utilizing new energy sources will probably become smaller and more portable. It won't even be surprising if they can somehow produce a real Tat'e. (After all, a recent documentary just revealed how the governments have always been covering up things about contacts with aliens and the discovery of new energy sources that can replace fossil fuels.)

Ah Suen and I unexpectedly reached a consensus in this regard (yes, it was a really strange consensus to make). Strange minds think alike, so he is the perfect choice to be put in charge of the manhua adaptation of my works. To borrow an epic quote from Jojo's Bizarre Adventure, "Stand users are drawn to each other." It is also my belief that like attracts like. Creators and readers are drawn to each other as well, and this attraction stems from the attracting between souls.

*T/N: A ROBOT ROVER LAUNCHED BY NASA IN 2011. LANDED ON MARS IN 2012.

I met Ah Suen for the third time at a teahouse in an afternoon together with my fiancée Miss E. Miss E has been a member of the Taiwan UFO Society since she was in high school and is very interested in paranormal phenomena. The three of us had a cosy chat about "aliens" and "the study of the soul". My heart almost stopped when Ah Suen said with unwavering certainty, "The USA is the axis of evil." His words have left a lasting impression, and I also keep thinking, is it a kind of necessary evil for a country to do unethical things to safeguard its own well-being?

The exploration of good and evil has always been the theme of the D Series, on which the second half of this manhua volume has started expanding. Be it Lai Feiyun's sword or Wang Xiao's strength, they are all symbols of their faith.

That day, Ah Suen gave me "Painting", a series of his older works as a gift. These books overwhelmed me and made me feel extremely indignant for him – how could a manhua artist as talented as him be so underrated? Very few manhua artists in Hong Kong possess his amazing talent for storytelling. I hope he'll be more successful. An adapted version can very well surpass the original story. Starting from this volume, Ah Suen has started pouring in more of his own ideas as his resonance with the story grows stronger, so the plot may differ more from the original books in the future. But I believe this will bring a lot pleasant surprises.

Manhua enthusiasts from Hong Kong often try to come up with ways to save the local manhua industry. Three years ago, I saved my own novels in a desolate publishing market. What I've learnt was this: don't worry about the reward, just concentrate on writing good novels. Only by enjoying and staying loyal to oneself, and never giving up, can one create works that enchant readers.

Chase Excellence, Success will Follow

With the advancement in technology, free manhua is easily accessible with just a simple search. But no matter how advanced technology is, the human soul still needs to be comforted through interactions facilitated by the creative process. I hope everyone can find such inspiration in this manhua – even it's just for a moment.

Thank you for your constant support for me and Ah Suen!

Tinhong

國家圖書館出版品預行編目(CIP)資料

術數師 宮本武藏的末世傳人／
孫威軍漫畫、天航原著
—— 初版——臺北市：原動力，102 9
冊；公分 ——

ISBN 978-986-6081-20-0 (平裝)
1.漫畫

術數師 vol 3

漫畫／孫威軍
原著／天航
封面設計／克里斯
版面編排／遊走星球編輯室
出版／原動力文化有限公司
地址◎台北市103赤峰街41巷7號1樓
電話◎（02）25585438　傳真◎（02）25585439
網址◎www.gaeabooks.pixnet.net/blog
電子信箱◎gaea@gaeabooks.com.tw
郵撥帳號◎19769541　戶名：蓋亞文化有限公司
總經銷／高見文化行銷股份有限公司
地址◎新北市樹林區佳園路2段70-1號二樓
電話◎（02）29178022　傳真◎（02）29156275
初版一刷／2013年9月
定價／新台幣 160 元
Printed in Taiwan

ISBN／978-986-6081-20-0
著作權所有・翻印必究
香港一漫年出版有限公司正式授權出版

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